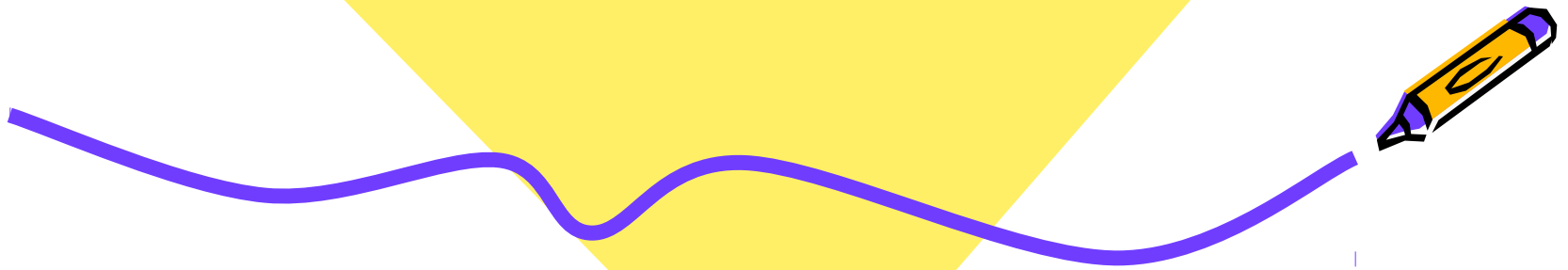


Developing a Winning Proposal



31 January 2007

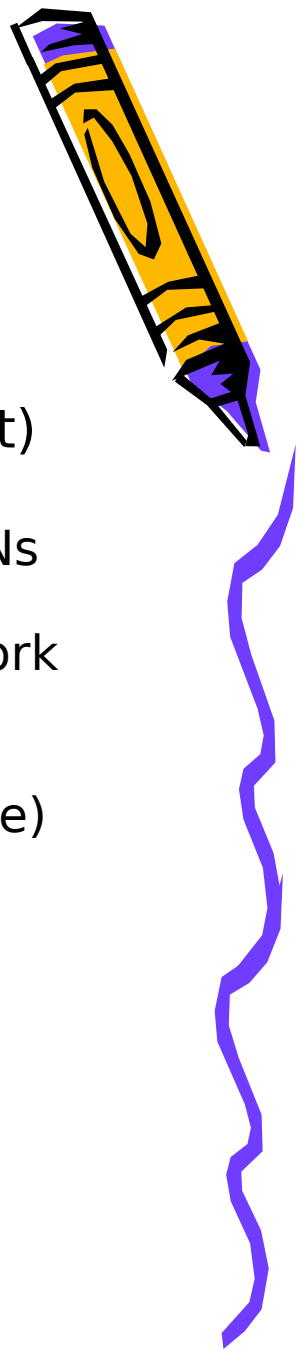
If You Remember Nothing Else...



- Read the solicitation – all of it (even the boring parts)
- Reread the solicitation – all of it - again
- If you have any questions – ask (BEFORE the solicitation closes), don't assume
- Prepare your proposal
- Have someone (not the preparer) check the proposal against the solicitation requirements
- Submit your proposal ON TIME



Uniform Contract Format (and what it means)



- Part I -- The Schedule (becomes part of the contract)
 - Section A - Solicitation/contract form (cover page)
 - Section B - Supplies or services and prices/costs (CLINs and SLINs – what/how many/how much)
 - Section C - Description/specifications/statement of work (describes/defines the what)
 - Section D - Packaging and marking (how to pack/box)
 - Section E - Inspection and acceptance (who and where)
 - Section F - Deliveries or performance (when/how long/where)
 - Section G - Contract administration data
 - Section H - Special contract requirements



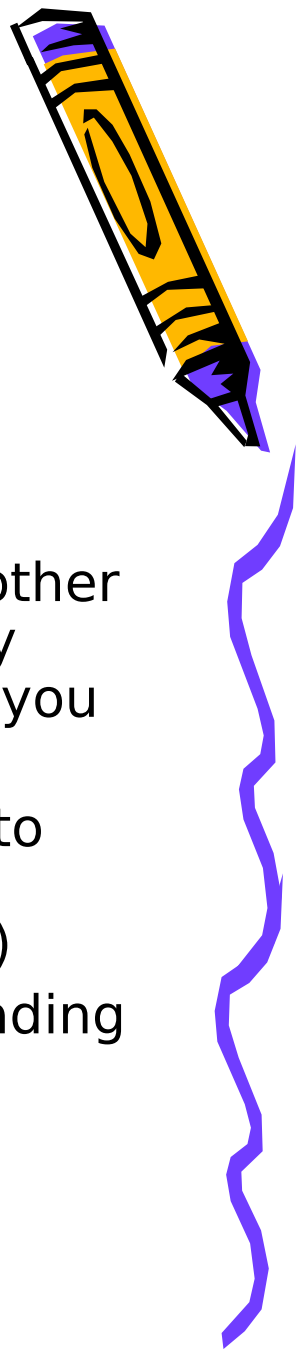
Uniform Contract Format (and what it means) (cont'd)



- Part II -- Contract Clauses (becomes part of the contract)
 - Section I - Contract clauses (the most boring – **but very important** – part of the contract)
- Part III -- List of Documents, Exhibits, and Other Attachments (becomes part of the contract)
 - Section J - List of attachments (Specification, SOW, SOO, CDRL, DD254, etc.)



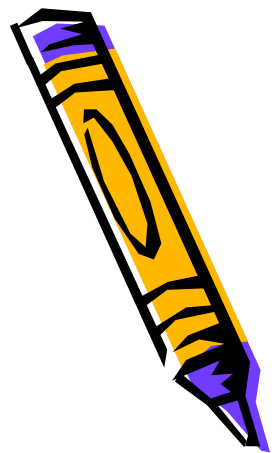
Uniform Contract Format (and what it means) (cont'd)



- Part IV -- Representations and Instructions (does NOT become a part of the contract)
 - Section K - Representations, certifications, and other statements of offerors or respondents (read very carefully - some of these carry legal penalties if you mis-certify)
 - Section L - Instructions, conditions, and notices to offerors or respondents (what to put into your proposal and where - can you follow directions?)
 - Section M - Evaluation factors for award (the grading system - what you need to demonstrate to win)



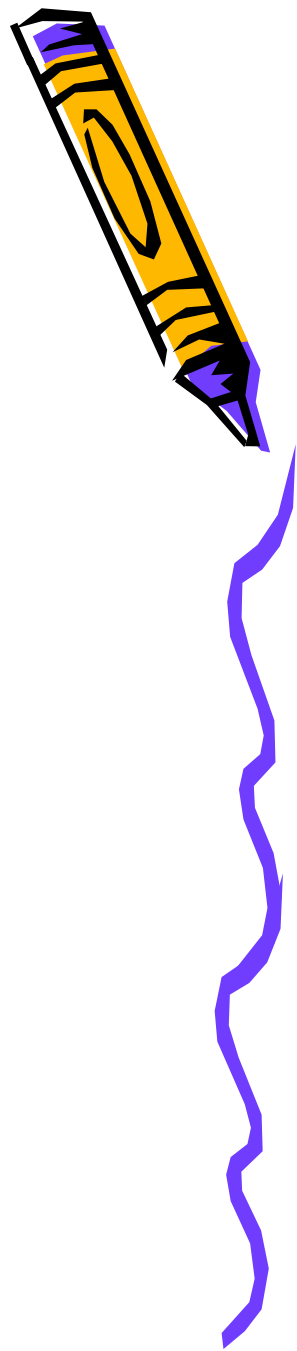
First Steps/Decisions



- Read Sections B & C
 - Is this a market area that I am in or want to get into
 - Should I propose as a prime contractor or as a subcontractor
 - If I want to be a prime, can I do it all myself or do I need to find others to round out my team
 - If I want to be a subcontractor, how do I identify others who are planning to propose and position myself as a part of their team



First Steps/Decisions (cont'd)



- Can I meet all the specification requirements?
- Can I deliver on time in the quantities specified?
- Can I put together a quality proposal in the time specified?



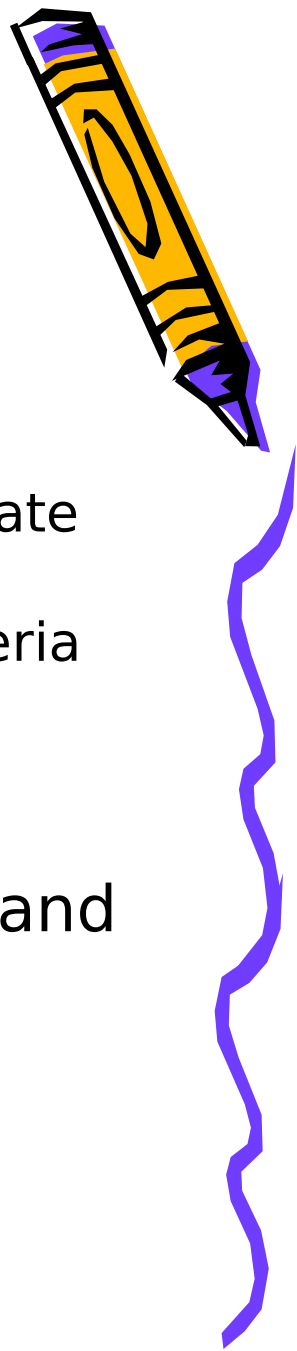
Understand the Groundrules



- Federal regulations require the acquiring activity to inform all offerors of the criteria, and their relative importance, that will be used to evaluate proposals (Section M)
- Government evaluators may only evaluate the proposal against the criteria listed in Section M
- Government evaluators may only evaluate a proposal using the information provided within the proposal itself
 - The only exception is information relating to past performance



Understand the “Grading System”

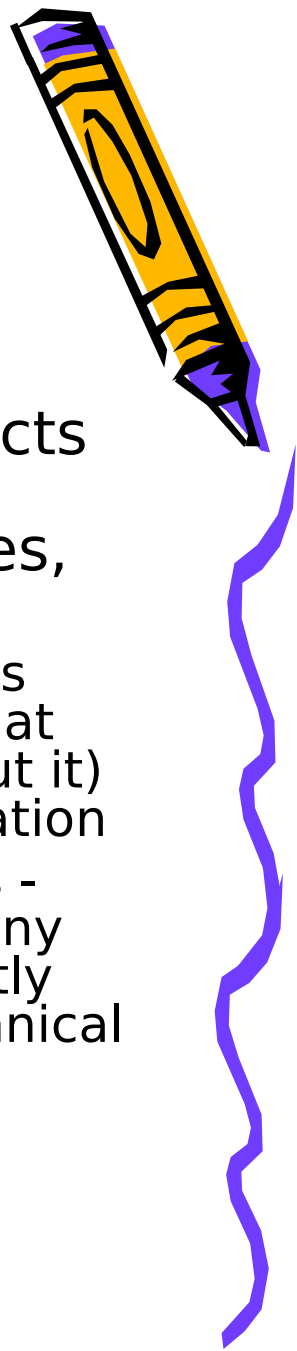


- Read Section M very carefully
 - It contains the criteria that will be used to evaluate your proposal
 - It specifies the relative importance of those criteria
 - It (frequently) provides information on how the criteria will be applied (e.g., what constitutes an outstanding vice satisfactory rating)
- Use this information when deciding where and how to focus the efforts of your proposal writing team



Follow the Instructions

- Section L tells you how the Government expects you to put your proposal together (e.g., how many volumes, what to put into those volumes, how many pages, etc.)
 - This is not the time to get creative – if information is requested in Section 1 of Volume 2, put it there (or at least provide a cross reference to where you DID put it)
 - don't make the evaluator have to hunt for information
 - Ensure that you complied with any page limitations - Government evaluators are not allowed to review any pages in excess of the limitation and PCOs frequently remove these pages before giving them to the technical evaluators to ensure they are not reviewed



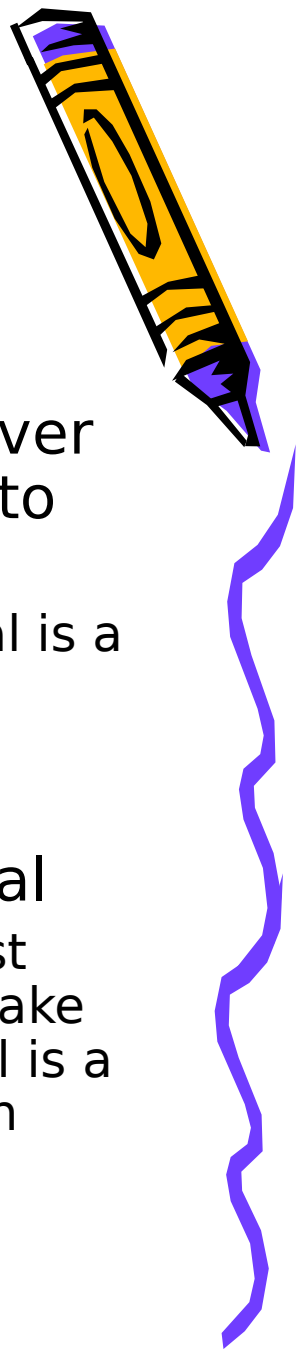
Writing Your Proposal



- Determine who is going to write the proposal (an individual, a team?)
- Ensure that everyone involved with the proposal understands the requirements, the evaluation factors and the proposal instructions
 - If you are unsure of something in the solicitation, get clarification, in writing, from the PCO
- Decide how you are going allocate time and resources (use the evaluation criteria as your guide)



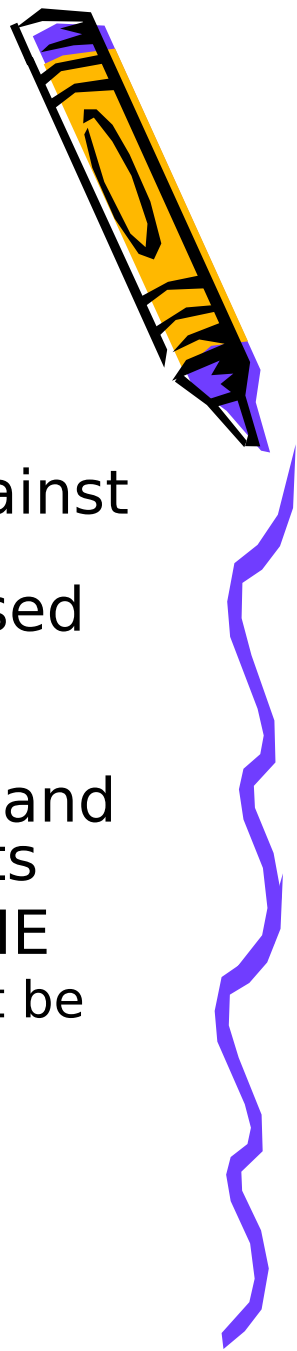
Writing Your Proposal (cont'd)



- Put your best effort forward the first time – never assume that you will be given an opportunity to have discussions/fine tune your proposal
 - Taking exception/putting conditions on your proposal is a risky business and may make your proposal unacceptable
- Ensure that your cost/price proposal is a reasonable reflection of your technical proposal
 - This admonition is particularly important for any cost type contract where the Contracting Officer must make an affirmative determination that your cost proposal is a **REALISTIC** representation of your technical approach



Writing Your Proposal (cont'd)



- Have someone who was not involved with writing/assembling the proposal review it against the solicitation to ensure that ALL of the requirements of the solicitation were addressed and/or followed
- Ensure your proposal is signed and that it includes an acknowledgement of the receipt and acceptance of all the solicitation amendments
- Make sure your proposal is submitted **ON TIME**
 - A late proposal, with very rare exceptions, may not be evaluated and is usually returned unopened



After the Award Decision



- Request a debriefing
 - To ensure that you get a debriefing, it must be requested, in writing, within 3 days of being notified of the award decision
- Debriefings should be treated as a learning opportunity
 - Debriefings should not be seen as an opportunity to search for the basis of a protest
 - Solicit information on what you can improve on for next time

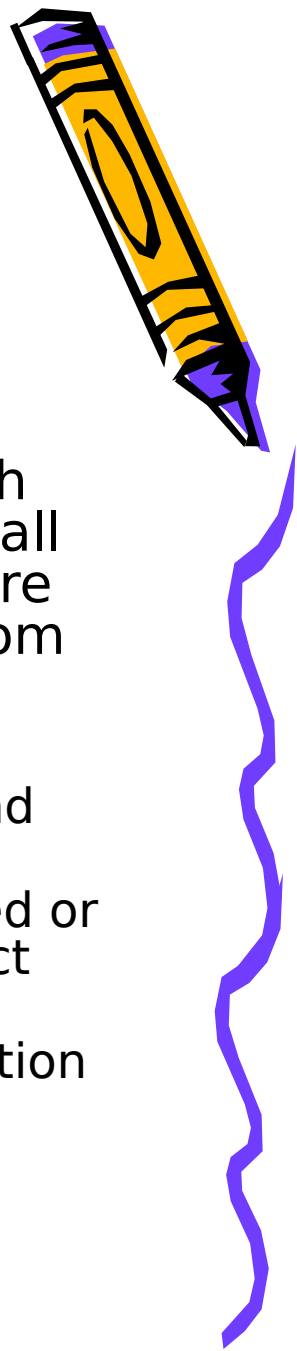


The Debriefing



- FAR Part 15.506 states that the debriefing information shall include:
 - The Government's evaluation of the significant weaknesses or deficiencies in the offeror's proposal, if applicable;
 - The overall evaluated cost or price (including unit prices), and technical rating, if applicable, of the successful offeror and the debriefed offeror, and past performance information on the debriefed offeror;
 - The overall ranking of all offerors, when any ranking was developed by the agency during the source selection;
 - A summary of the rationale for award;
 - For acquisitions of commercial items, the make and model of the item to be delivered by the successful offeror; and
 - Reasonable responses to relevant questions about whether source selection procedures contained in the solicitation, applicable regulations, and other applicable authorities were followed





The Debriefing (cont'd)

- The debriefing shall not include point-by-point comparisons of the debriefed offeror's proposal with those of other offerors. Moreover, the debriefing shall not reveal any information prohibited from disclosure by 24.202 or exempt from release under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) including --
 - Trade secrets;
 - Privileged or confidential manufacturing processes and techniques;
 - Commercial and financial information that is privileged or confidential, including cost breakdowns, profit, indirect cost rates, and similar information; and
 - The names of individuals providing reference information about an offeror's past performance.



Questions

